



News Release

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Date: July 19, 2005

Meeting Set to Develop Spring Rise Proposal

OMAHA – The public is invited to attend a meeting on the development of a proposal for a “spring rise” from Gavins Point Dam on the Missouri River. To comply with the 2003 Amended Biological Opinion published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, releases from the reservoirs would be increased during the spring months to benefit the endangered pallid sturgeon.

The meeting will be held July 26-28 in Omaha at the National Park Service Building, 601 Riverfront Drive. The session on the first day will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., on the second day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on the third day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The meeting will be facilitated by CDR Associates, an independent collaborative decision making and conflict management firm, which is a contractor of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

The meeting will focus on the proposals for a spring rise and include comment periods for the public to provide input. The sessions will also include reports from the Hydrology and Water Quality; Pallid Sturgeon/Fish and Wildlife; Historic, Cultural and Burial Sites; and Socio-Economic Technical Working Groups.

On the second day, a public workshop will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. when the public can provide input and ask questions of members of the plenary group and technical working groups.

The Missouri River Spring Rise Plenary Group is the central deliberating body of basin stakeholders for building a process to develop a spring rise proposal to be submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers by August and implementation in March 2006. The group is made up of close to 50 representatives of federal agencies, tribes, states, and a wide range of special interest groups.

The goal of the planning effort is to involve basin stakeholders in the development of a proposal that complies with the Biological Opinion of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, while limiting risk to both upstream and downstream river users. Previous meetings were held last month in St. Joseph, Mo., and Bismarck, N.D. A major element of any proposal for a spring rise will be the development of protocols for conducting the rise, including criteria for starting and stopping it, as well as its size, timing and frequency.

Information on the spring rise process is available at: <http://missouririver.ecr.gov> .